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September 7, 1972

MEMORANDUM FOR: HENRY A. KISSINGER

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FROM:

JOHN H. HOLDRIDGE *JH/HAS*

SUBJECT:

Peking Briefs its Cadres on Foreign Policy
Developments

Following is a synopsis of the major points in the briefing and documentary materials:

-- According to Chairman Mao, China's current foreign policy line is designed to exploit contradictions and cause dissension between the U. S. and the USSR. China's main danger continues to come from the Soviets, while the U. S. is seeking to ease pressures on itself and to stabilize its foothold in Asia.

-- Without doubt the Soviets have arrived at some sort of a secret agreement with the U. S. on the Indochina situation. Reflecting this, the Russians turned down a request from Hanoi to have the Soviets sweep the mines from their harbors with the excuse that they lacked the technical capability to do so. [Comment: The recent appearance of a Chinese mine-sweeper in the port of Haiphong would appear to be an effort by Peking to "exploit the contradiction" between Moscow and Hanoi to its own advantage. This observation also shows the depth of Chinese sensitivity to U. S. -Soviet contacts and suspicions as to what might be involved.]

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-- The U. S. will certainly withdraw its forces from Indochina: it cannot afford not to withdraw. China has advised its Vietnamese comrades that it would not be too late to solve the question of reuniting Vietnam once the U. S. has withdrawn its troops. [Comment: This observation is about as concrete a sign as we have seen that the Chinese are urging Hanoi to get the U. S. out of Vietnam now via negotiations and then deal with the reunification issue by means of protracted revolutionary warfare if political struggle will not succeed in reuniting the country under Hanoi's leadership. It may be noteworthy that the Chinese view ignores the exact shape of an interim political settlement, perhaps because Peking would like to see Hanoi negotiate with the U. S. solely in terms of a military withdrawal, or even in terms which are closer to the U. S. position than to Hanoi's.]

-- China is apprehensive about Soviet influence in Burma, where the Russians have been in secret diplomatic contact with the Ne Win government. China should "start to work on" the Burmese leaders at once, although this will be complicated by the continuing support of the PRC for insurgent groups opposed to Ne Win.

-- China's entry into the U. N. has been a great victory and has led to a tremendous increase in PRC influence among the medium and small countries. Nonetheless the Chinese have made some mistakes, as at the Stockholm Environmental Conference. Such mistakes should be minimized in the future by having PRC U. N. delegates report directly to the central leadership for their instructions.

-- China will support the 200-mile territorial water limit claimed by Latin American countries, but on the basis that limits should be set variably according to each country's particular situation. The seabed is a treasure house of natural resources, and in the future all countries will contend for control over seabed resources.

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cc: Mr. Sonnenfeldt

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